

modern medical science can offer. He needs here as much as in the large cities, knowledge of modern business methods which will establish him on a sound economic basis. He needs carefully to avoid medical and social ruts. They are easily gotten into, and from them extraction is most difficult.

In every town less in size than a city, there ought to be no inherent difficulty in the doctors getting together on a common professional basis for a common medical center which would usually mean a hospital. Such a hospital should be developed in the light of the principles discussed last month in this JOURNAL under "Hospital Improvement and Standardization." With or without a hospital, the doctors of the small town can establish a common meeting place, a medical club, if you please, where society meetings may be held, and social affairs may be enjoyed. This common center can be provided with a stereopticon, books, journals, and possibly specimens. By pooling the time and money and interests of all the doctors of the locality, various definite things can be accomplished. The chief medical journals can be subscribed to from the group, or each man can take a different one and file them all carefully at the library. The affair can be conducted as a joint stock company or, better, as a district or branch medical society, an integral unit in the corresponding county medical society. Such a town organization should include every reputable doctor in the town. To a varying degree, it will usually be found that business interests can be developed and bettered by such an arrangement. Different doctors can easily develop along special lines that appeal to them. Consultation and group diagnosis can be made easier. Over-lapping of work can be eliminated. Even a more economical office administration can easily be developed in many cases. Each doctor can arrange for more time off for study and recreation and travel, if he knows his affairs will be equitably cared for in his absence. In the average small town, where specialization is not too narrow, each doctor in turn can enjoy a real vacation without business loss, and with real business advantage.

The advantages of such a club or association or headquarters become more apparent the more the idea is considered. Out of such a club or local society may well develop the local hospital, which will have a solid nucleus from which to grow. Even in the beginnings, a small hospital should recognize that profits should be turned to better service. One important way to do this is for the surgical operating rooms and laboratory to have an established percentage of the income of the institution, which should be devoted to the upkeep and improvement of these departments. Doctors should recognize the advantages of pro rata investment in surgical, laboratory, library and other hospital equipment. All of this can grow naturally and safely out of a properly organized medical profession in the small town.

If you have any suggestions, or if you have had an experience in your town which offers encouragement or which presents a problem, send it in. In counsel is help. We need to develop the rural

and small town hospital. Read over what has been written in this and the two preceding JOURNALS on this topic and apply it to your own town. You may see something in a new light. Start something. Every village can have some such society as here suggested if it has as many as two doctors within hailing distance of each other.

#### PHYSICIAN HEADS SOCIAL AGENCIES.

The election of President Ray Lyman Wilbur, of Stanford University, as President of The California State Conference of Social Agencies at their Eleventh Annual Meeting at San Jose, on April 25, 1919, is an event of more than passing interest.

President Wilbur, after an eminently successful career as a practitioner of medicine, has identified himself with the progress of medical education of the Pacific Coast by organizing the Stanford University Medical School and by conducting its destinies as Dean until he was elected as President of Stanford University. He is one of the very few university heads on this continent drawn from the ranks of the medical profession.

During his professional career, and more especially as dean of the medical school, President Wilbur has had dealings at first hand with those important and serious sociological problems which are connected with sickness and disease. These problems have always been of particular interest to him and he has done much to meet them at the medical school by the establishment of the Social Service Department in the medical clinics and at the hospital. His watchword has been from the beginning, service to the needy patients and efficient assistance to those who need support until they are thoroughly rehabilitated. Dr. Wilbur has shown his continued interest in this organization which was started by him with so much success by remaining on the board of directors of the Stanford Clinics Auxiliary and the San Francisco Maternity, which is a charitable organization in charge of the social work in the clinics and at the hospital.

Dr. Wilbur, therefore, brings to his new duties a wide practical experience and a splendid record of past accomplishments, and the conference is to be congratulated on its selection. His election as President will serve to bind closer, as it also typifies, the intimate relationship between the physician and social welfare work of all sorts.

#### THE PSEUDO-MEDICAL PARASITE.

He styles himself doctor, and his habitat is San Francisco or Los Angeles or some smaller town. He is a type of a genus, or of a species, or even of a family which infests all cities and many towns. He preaches to the gullible and drops into their open mouths, succulent and juicy bits of anatomy, physiology and pathology through the medium of the newspaper and by virtue of his own private printing press.

Since Barnum's characterization of humanity, he finds it pays to advertise. And this he does with an hermaphroditic jargon of science and nonsense, well calculated to deceive the innocent and prey on the simpleminded. As all roads led to the eternal seven hills, so do all physiological

paths and pathological by-paths, under his master guidance, lead to the eternal, and never-before-discovered truth that he, even he, has a system of wonders and marvels, known scientifically to cure all physical infirmities, and heal all manner of afflictions. Ho! ye sick and simpleminded! Come ye, and learn how science, great Science, can solve your disorders and make you hale and strong.

And they come! The lame, the halt and the blind. From the byways and the highways. Seldom, even when illusion's veil is torn aside, do they glimpse the secretive African in the lumber of the quacking "specialist's" show. Yet here, true to form, ancient Mammon leads the ball and provides the stimulus for the full performance.

How ring down the curtain on the medical quack? How expose him and keep the unlearned and mentally helpless from his grasp? Some say it cannot be done. That while this race is credulous, sensation-mongering and ripe to be plucked, these things will continue. Perhaps so. And still why not recognize that the modern physician is no longer a scientific recluse, charged with preserving his knowledge and skill for his own esoteric circle. Why not start a widespread drive for personal propaganda for public health? Teach the people the truth. They, above all, are entitled to it. The doctor, above all, is fit to teach it. The truth shall make them free—free from the quack, the cult, and the ism—free to be healthy, and free from fear.

#### TRANSLATING MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE FOR POPULAR USE.

For some time the Editor has had in mind an article on this topic. The entire subject has recently been phrased so admirably, however, in the Vocational Summary, that the following excerpt is given verbatim from an address by F. A. Robinson before the Conference on National Safety Codes, convening at the National Bureau of Standards, January 15-16, 1919:

"It is pertinent to paraphrase and quote from an address entitled 'What Now?' by Franklin H. Wentworth, in which he says:

"Our logical course of action would seem, therefore, to be, first, to arouse the American people to a sense of their collective responsibility; and, second, so to popularize our scientific findings as to permeate with them the common consciousness and inculcate public habits of care respecting these hazards. The American people will not avail themselves of the helps we gratuitously offer them until they first are conscious of the need for such helps and then are taught how to apply them.

"Without making invidious distinctions, and without thought of any undervaluation of ourselves, we must admit that the popularizing of knowledge is a responsibility which, unluckily for the world, men of science are, as a rule, inclined to shirk. Their habits of intense and concentrated application generally make them impatient of popular writing. They are experts, and when they write they write for experts. They think habitually in technical terms, and when it comes to explaining matters to the layman they do not know where to begin. Many of the most brilliant

and successful scientists are quite incompetent to explain themselves, having neither the literary ability nor the required training for a clear, simple statement. This is, of course, quite pardonable; but accompanying this lack there should be no contempt for the popular writer; for it is from this intermediary alone that the common life of the world must gather all it knows of scientific subjects; knowledge which may distract and derange the public mind, or, on the other hand, correct, sober, and enlighten it. No one knows, who has never attempted to make clear a scientific subject, how much of ignorance may be hidden under a technical term, or how much clearer and more minute one's knowledge must be to enable him to translate such terms into ordinary English. There has been much discussion of late as to whether the profession of writing can be taught; but it is certain, at least, that if any literary effort can be bettered by special training it is that which deals in a general way with technical subjects.

"Facing then the inescapable fact that our efforts and researches can be made effective only by their translation into the common tongue, it is clear that either we must develop within our fraternity our latent aptitude as public teachers or we must appeal for aid to those who are naturally endowed with such desirable equipment."

#### PUBLIC HEALTH AND HIGH COST OF LIVING.

A "cost of living" survey was made in 1917 in the District of Columbia by the Bureau of Labor Statistics under Commissioner Royal S. Meeker. From this study Commissioner Meeker concludes that \$137.50 was necessary for food per adult male to maintain a worker's family in reasonable health and comfort in 1916. This made no allowance for wasteful cooking or extravagant buying. Half of the white families of Washington spent less than this amount. It is safely concluded, therefore, that the health of half the working population of Washington was impaired in 1916 by inadequate diet.

On the whole, the net result of high costs of certain types of foods, and of the food regulations of the war, has undoubtedly been beneficial. There has been a decreased use of meat and an increased use of vegetables. Also greater use of whole-grain flours and lessened fineness of milling have been beneficial. Undoubtedly the war has had a considerable effect in relieving American constipation and unloading the over-worked American liver.

Wordy and voluminous newspaper ads. by chiropractics recall the witticism of Mr. C. J. Sullivan. "Some are born great. Some achieve greatness and some have the chiropractic thrust." It is the "chiropractic thrust," of course well compensated, that seems the chief and sole stock in trade of these adroit re-adjusters of the human spine and pocket-book.

Only utterly sordid greed leads men and corporations to advertise worthless, secret and often dangerous medicines to the public. The moral crime is all the worse in that the dupes and sufferers are chiefly people who can ill afford to be swindled, either in health or money.